

A Wave of Well-Wishes

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, visitor restrictions and other limitations have been challenging for loved ones and those who have been hospitalized during this time. While necessary to limit any exposure to or potential spread of the COVID-19 virus, limiting hospital visitors can lead to feelings of isolation for patients.

OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital and OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria put out a community call to help bring a smile to the faces of their patients – even if only for a brief moment.

Using inspiration from what spectators do at University of Iowa football games when they “wave” at patients in the children's hospital, the professional nursing congress at OSF Saint Francis decided to form a wave of their own on May 5.

Several hundred people including The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Bradley University cheerleaders, law enforcement officers – including K9 units, firefighters, OSF leadership, OSF Mission Partners and other community members were on hand to spread some cheer to patients.

“The Sisters were here to show that the Mission is alive and well. They are supportive of everything that we do here and are supportive of those within our community also,” said Chris Karpowicz, coordinator of Mission Services for OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center and lead organizer for the event. “People want to be together, people want to be united. We've been away from each other for so long and we have been able to see each other to say thank you and to just show appreciation for each other and I think, hopefully, we come out of this a little kinder and a little bit more collaborative.”

While the actual ‘wave’ was just a few minutes, it's hoped the impact will be long-lasting.

“I think this really boosted morale for those that are up there doing the care, but it also created a unified network of people right here that are working together to do that same thing and impact the lives of those to come to us for service.”